

# ROMANIAN CHURCH REJECTS CALL TO RECOGNIZE SCHISMATIC OCU—WOULD ONLY EMBOLDEN THEM AND INCREASE VIOLENCE

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The Romanian Orthodox Church has rejected the Ukrainian ambassador to Romania's call for it to formally recognize the "Orthodox Church of Ukraine," which is recognized as schismatic by the majority of the Orthodox world.

The creation of the OCU by Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople has only deepened the religious crisis in Ukraine, the Romanian Church said in comments to [stiripesurse.ro](https://stiripesurse.ro), and the Romanian clergy serving in Ukraine completely reject the state-sponsored OCU.

At a press conference on [June 26](#), Ambassador Igor Prokopchuk "emphasize[d] the primary importance of the issue of full recognition of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine by the Romanian Orthodox Church," adding that it would represent "a very large contribution to relations and trust between the two peoples."

Interestingly, in an attempt to bolster his case, the ambassador referenced the attack at the Holy Spirit Cathedral in Chernivtsi on [June 17](#), during which OCU thugs violently attacked His Eminence Metropolitan Meletiy of Chernivtsi, clerics, and parishioners. However, the incident, which made headlines throughout the world, only alarmed Romanians about the actions of the OCU.

Ukraine's Bukovina region is home to millions of Romanians, who belong to more than 120 parishes of the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church, including the Chernivtsi cathedral. "The Romanian community in Chernivtsi is saddened by the fact that, without their will, their places of worship are being taken away. Over 20 people came, entered the church, took the priests out and beat two of them. When people started to gather, the police did not allow anyone to enter the church yard," an eyewitness told [dcnews.ro](https://dcnews.ro).

Likewise, [jurnal.md](https://jurnal.md) ran an article entitled, "Violent attack on the Cathedral in Chernivtsi, defended by Romanians; Among the victims are the Metropolitan of Bukovina and two priests."

Romanian Member of European Parliament Claudiu Târziu [condemned the incident](#), calling on Romanian authorities to officially condemn the abuses that Romanian Orthodox faithful are subject to in Ukraine.

Against this background, the Romanian Patriarchate rejects Ambassador Prokopchuk's call, reiterating its stance initially formulated by the Holy Synod in [February 2019](#), that the Ukraine ecclesiastical issue should be resolved on a pan-Orthodox level.

A Patriarchate representative told [stiripesurse.ro](#):

For almost 30 years, the problem of the schism in Ukraine has not been resolved, nor has there been an appeal for pan-Orthodox mediation, as was done in the case of the schism in Bulgaria.

Noting this impasse in resolving the situation, the Ecumenical Patriarchate granted the tomos of autocephaly to the hierarchs, clergy and faithful who were in schism with the Russian Orthodox Church and with the entire Orthodoxy, but this tomos was accepted only by Ukrainian Orthodox who were not in communion with the Moscow Patriarchate.

Therefore, the problem of ecclesiastical unity in Ukraine is not currently fully resolved, also because there is a large population of Russian ethnicity here, which maintains direct connection with the Moscow Patriarchate.

Regarding this tense ecclesiastical situation in Ukraine, the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church reiterates the viewpoint expressed previously in its sessions of May 24, 2018 and October 25, 2018. It was then recommended that the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Moscow Patriarchate identify, through dialogue, a solution to the mentioned ecclesiastical dispute, by maintaining unity of faith, respecting the administrative-pastoral freedom of clergy and faithful in this country (including the right to autocephaly) and restoring eucharistic communion.

In case of failure of bilateral dialogue, it is necessary to convene a synaxis of all primates of Orthodox Churches to resolve the existing problem.

As the Romanian Synod has stated before, it is highly concerned about the fate of the Romanian Orthodox faithful in 127 parishes of the canonical UOC:

It's necessary to obtain written guarantees from the ecclesiastical and state authorities of Ukraine that the ethnic and linguistic identity of Romanians will be respected, as well as that these Romanian Orthodox will have the possibility to organize themselves

into a Romanian Orthodox Vicariate and cultivate spiritual ties with the Romanian Patriarchate, to be supported through the sending of liturgical and theological books in their mother tongue, namely the Romanian language. In Romania, a Ukrainian Orthodox Vicariate has been functioning since 1990.

Further, the Romanian clergy and people themselves firmly reject the option of joining the schismatic OCU, and recognition of it by the Romanian Church would only increase violence from the sect:

Following consultations with Romanian Orthodox clergy and laypeople from Ukraine, the majority of them firmly reject, even with fear, a possible transfer to the jurisdiction of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine.

Romanian Orthodox in Ukraine consider that recognition by the Romanian Orthodox Church of this Church would automatically lead to a stronger siege from Ukrainian authorities to force them to pass under the jurisdiction of Metropolitan Epiphany.

The Romanian Church state statement also refers to the “Romanian Orthodox Church of Ukraine” administration that it established in [February 2024](#), and which the Ukrainian authorities [refused to register](#), given the state support for the OCU:

On the other hand, the Ukrainian State doesn’t respect its own laws, refusing to recognize the Religious Association (Administration) of the Romanian Orthodox Church of Ukraine which meets all legal criteria provided by current Ukrainian legislation.

Finally, the statement emphasizes that Ukraine’s promises to protect Romanian-language services are disingenuous:

Moreover, the promises of Ukrainian authorities to guarantee services in Romanian language seem to lack credibility, especially in the context where the same authorities boast about conducting the first service in Ukrainian language in a church in Chernivtsi taken abusively, on whose frontispiece is written in Romanian language, with Cyrillic characters: “One in three hypostases—God.” This situation raises serious questions about the sincerity and good faith of their efforts.

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